FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WCASA and Community Activists “Wrap” the Capitol to Honor Survivors of Sexual Violence

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Madison, WI – As part of the observance of Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), members of the community will gather to physically encircle the Capitol Building on Saturday, April 28th at 2:00 p.m.

The event, called “Wrap Around the Capitol” is aimed at honoring and supporting survivors of sexual assault. It is a project of a new group called the Survivors & Allies Task Force, organized through the Department of Justice Office of Justice Assistance (OJA) and the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA).

“We began meeting last year,” explained Lisa Pentermann, a WCASA Board Member and member of the Survivors & Allies group. “At our second meeting, we decided we wanted to go beyond talking and do something visible, tangible, and public. Sexual Assault Awareness Month provided the natural time and place.”

Sexual violence is pervasive in Wisconsin as well as across the nation; the numbers are quite sobering. Over this past year an estimated 15,000 Wisconsin women, men, and children became victims of sexual violence. One national survey found that one in five women, and one in seventy-one men, are sexually violated during the course of their lives.

The event brings survivors of sexual violence and those that want to end violence together in a visible sign of solidarity. In addition to encircling the Capitol, there will be a display of the “Traveling Pants” – a collection of blue jean pants colorfully decorated by survivors of sexual assault with messages about their right to be safe and to heal from the trauma of rape. There will also be speakers, and a musical performance by Jen Hopper of the Angel Band Project, a musical group formed to honor the singer’s partner, Teresa Butz, who was murdered during a vicious attack in their home; both women were stabbed and sexually assaulted during the attack.

“We’re so thrilled to have Angel Band Project with us,” said Ms. Pentermann. “It’s an extraordinary example of turning pain and tragedy into something pro-active, and using your talent raise awareness, and of the resilience of survivors.”

WCASA invites advocates, allies, supporters, and members from the community at large to join them on April 28th to stand against violence in our community.

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